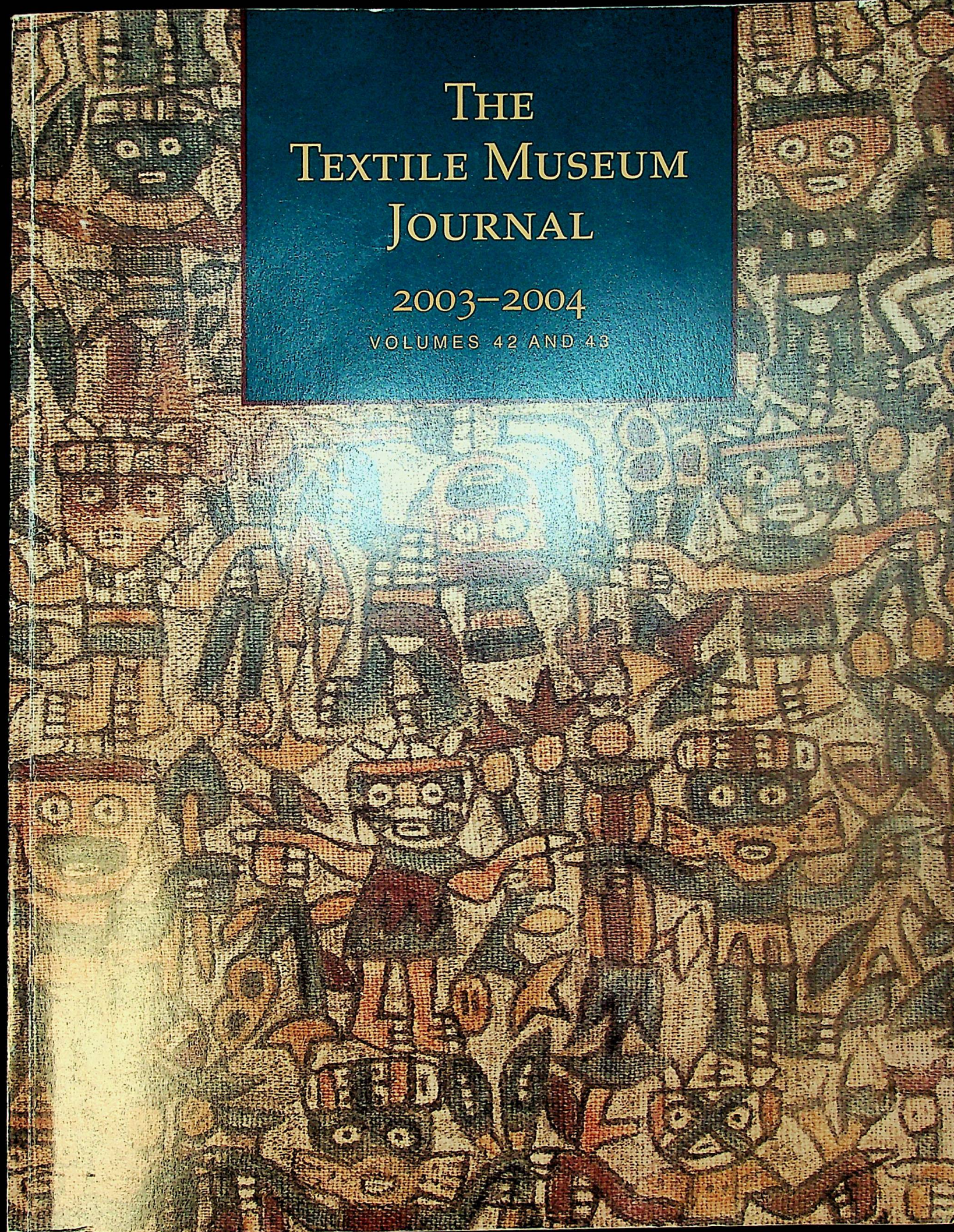


THE
TEXTILE MUSEUM
JOURNAL

2003-2004

VOLUMES 42 AND 43



CONTRIBUTORS

Publication of *The Textile Museum Journal* relies upon generous financial support.
We wish to thank the following contributors to this issue:

THE CHARLES DELMAR FOUNDATION

RONALD AND MAXINE LINDE FOUNDATION

BÉA WELSH WEICKER

GIVEN IN MEMORY OF ED FRANQUEMONT

Front and back covers: Skirt panel from a woman's dress (detail, warp direction horizontal), overall size: 82 x 158.5 cm. The Textile Museum 1964.31.2, museum purchase. See Mary Frame, *What the Women Were Wearing: A Deposit of Early Nasca Dresses and Shawls from Cahuachi, Peru*, pp. 13–53, fig. 24.

ISSN: 0083-7407

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THE TEXTILE MUSEUM JOURNAL
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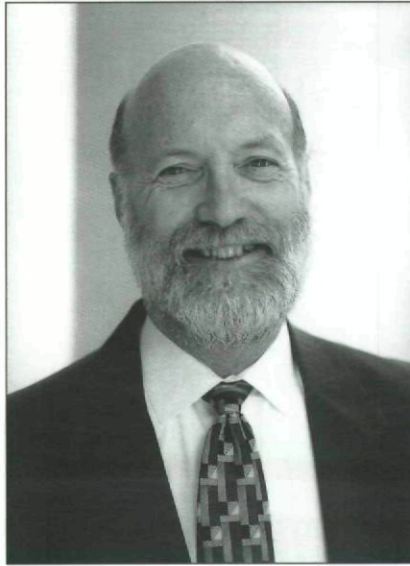
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Edward M. Franquemont, 1999.
Photograph by Dede Hatch.



Fig. 1. Early *loraypo* pattern, detail of a Chinchero *llijilla*.



Fig. 2. Recent *loraypo* patterns, details of three Chinchero belts.

Eureka! Examples of Change in Traditional Andean Textiles from Chinchero

Edward M. Franquemont

Introductory Note

This article was written and submitted in 1984. At that time, unresolved difficulties prevented publication, and unfortunately the article languished in the file. After the tragic death of Ed Franquemont in March 2004, I re-read the article and approached his wife, Christine Franquemont, an ethnobotanist who worked closely with Ed, about the possibility of publishing it in Ed's memory. Although The Textile Museum Journal regrets this long delay, we are happy to publish the article now since the insights it offers are as interesting and relevant today as they were when it was written more than twenty years ago.

All the photographs were taken by Ed in Chinchero unless otherwise noted.

Ann Pollard Rowe

The Quechua people around Cuzco, Peru, wrap themselves in their village and ethnic identity when they dress. The entire area is a mosaic of small, geographically defined culture areas that are each distinguished most easily by a particular style of dress; combinations of garments and color schemes, along with a distinct style of fancy warp-faced weaving, indicate the geographical and social affiliation of the wearer. This dress code is so powerful and conformity so complete that traditional Quechua women dressed in their finest appear to have totally surrendered their individuality and personal tastes to the expression of this shared group identity. The form, style, and aesthetics of this traditional art system seem to be the product of the social group as a whole, not the individuals who actually do the weaving. It is difficult to understand the role of

genius, vision, and special talent, which are such critical issues for artists of more literate societies, and it is especially difficult to fathom how change can take place in the context of an art tradition that submerges the individual creative impulse beneath the collective whole.

During the years since 1976 that Christine and I have been working with the weavers of Chinchero, Peru we have had the opportunity to learn about and even witness firsthand several different kinds of change in their weaving complex. Some of these changes might be called "seriation" in that they reflect gradual shifts in popularity of patterns, pattern variants, or color combinations. These kinds of changes have brought about, for instance, the increasing standardization of the *loraypo* design shown in figures 1 and 2. Older textiles show a general freedom to innovate in the center of the diamond, while over the past twenty or thirty years the tendency has been to stay consistently with the same motif in this central zone.

Another set of changes that we can document fairly well results from shifts in the quality and availability of raw materials. When indigo effectively disappeared from Cuzco during the 1960s, the central *pampa* section of the Chinchero *llijlla* (shawl) went from deep indigo blue to a natural black sheep's wool.

A third type of change is exemplified by a kind of horizon style in poncho design that swept through the Peruvian sierra during the past forty years. Before World War II, Chinchero men wore their hair in a single long braid and used a short red and indigo blue striped poncho (fig. 3) that advertised their village identity. Since that time, however, they have joined most of the other Quechua men of the area in using a longer coffee colored poncho of either natural alpaca hair or *nogal* (walnut) dyed sheep's wool (fig. 4). Chinchero people suggest that this poncho was adopted in imitation of the vicuña hair ponchos favored by culturally Hispanic hacienda owners, but more importantly it reflects the emerging identification made by Quechua men as part of an area-wide social class in place of local village

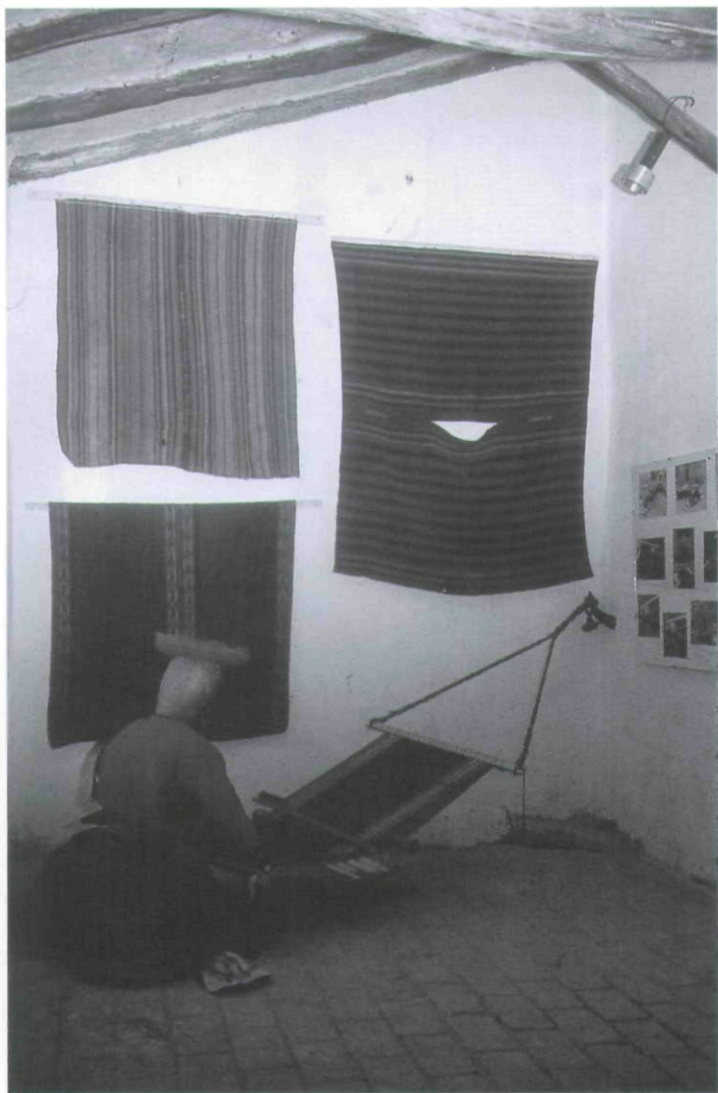


Fig. 3. Red and blue Chinchero poncho, on wall at upper right. The photograph shows the exhibition in the short-lived Chinchero Center for Traditional Culture organized by Edward and Christine Franquemont.

affiliations. Once the area-wide poncho style came into being, however, it too began to evolve with the changing social and economic realities of the Andes. Younger Quechua men now tend to favor a bright red synthetic yarn poncho woven in the San Jeronimo jail; they feel that this poncho allies them with the tastes of the emerging class of young college educated students and professionals that fills the bureaucracy of Cuzco.

Each of these kinds of changes in the Chinchero textile complex—seriation, material, or horizon related—is interesting in its own right and deserves a fuller explanation and exploration. But in this paper, I want to focus on a fourth kind of change brought about by the diffusion of new characteristics, designs, or techniques from other areas because we have had some good firsthand looks at the process of diffusion as it happens and at its consequences.

In 1977, a group of Chinchero women who were discussing textiles with us reminisced that in their youth the use of supplementary warp was unknown in Chinchero. This weaving concept was brought to Chinchero by a male trader from the neighboring town of Anta who came regularly to barter for potatoes and livestock. When he realized that the women of Chinchero were extremely interested in textiles, he brought several *llijllas* from his own hometown to add to his bargaining position. From these pieces, the women of Chinchero learned to weave with supplementary warp as in the



Fig. 4. Chinchero man (third from right) wearing a *nogal* dyed poncho.



Fig. 5. Detail of an Anta style *llijlla*, showing three supplementary-warp patterned stripes flanked by 3-color complementary-warp weave stripes.

patterns in the central bands of the Anta style *llijlla* shown in figure 5.

This use of supplementary warp actually represents a considerable intellectual challenge for people who are not used to nonstructural elaboration of design. The complementary-warp weaves that are at home in Chinchero use a warp composed of matched sets of threads of equivalent value and function that form the design and at the same time make the structure of the fabric. In weaving with supplementary warp, the yarns are differentiated into those that make the fabric and those that make the design. This new class of weaves requires a different warp plan and weaving technique, and presents different design potential.¹ Once mastered, however, weaving with supplementary warp is considerably faster and easier than complementary-warp weaves. For this reason, this new weave—always called *ley* despite a great diversity of appearance—has come to dominate the belt weaving of Chinchero (fig. 6).

This has been especially true since the arrival of the tourist demand in the late 1960s, because a *ley* belt commands the same price as a complementary-warp patterned belt but can be



Fig. 6. Four samples of *ley* belt patterns from Chinchero with supplementary-warp patterning. Woven for the Center for Traditional Textiles of Cuzco, 2004. Photograph by Mary Frame.

woven twice as quickly. *Ley* belts have been such a commercial success that there are now some Chinchero weavers who can do no other patterns. In response to our persistent questions, our friends were able to pin down the date of the introduction of supplementary warp to the early 1940s through the ages of their children, but they were totally unclear about how the learning had actually happened. "*Yachachikurayku*," they said, "we just taught ourselves;" the image is of the entire community anonymously and simultaneously opening to receive this new idea. Despite the intellectual accomplishment and the vast economic importance of this introduction, Chinchero people can remember no particular individual accomplishment, no moment of breakthrough, no "Eureka!"

This does not necessarily mean there was no such moment or key innovator who captured the new idea. During the late 1970s we had the opportunity to witness another diffusion of a new idea into Chinchero that was comparable in importance; in this case the skills and energies of a single individual were in fact absolutely essential. By that time, Chinchero's Sunday barter market had become a major center for the

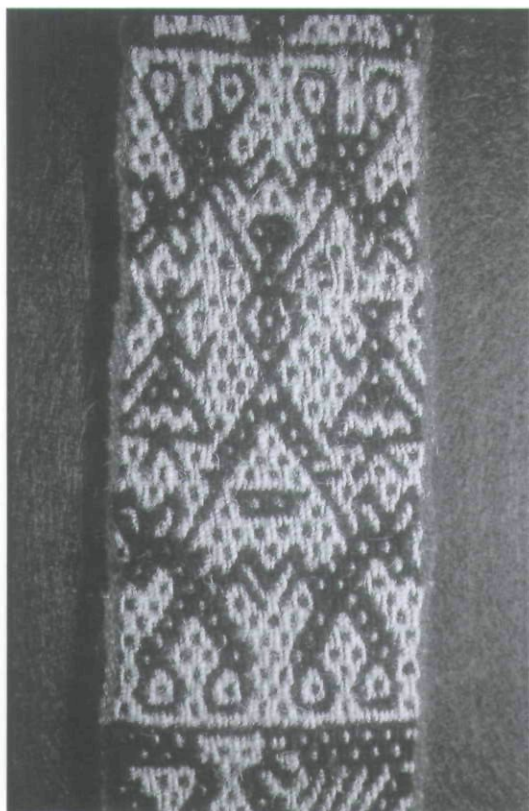


Fig. 7. Detail of a Lares area belt with a design of the colonial period rebel Inca leader Tupac Amaru being drawn and quartered, woven in complementary-warp weave with 3-span floats aligned in alternate pairs (called "pebble weave" by Cason and Cahlander).



Fig. 8. Nilda Callañaupa picking *kiku* (*Bidens* sp.) to be used to make a yellow dye.

sale of textiles to tourists, and the women who controlled spaces to sell in the market quickly developed constellations of *comadres*, trade partners, and other affines that brought them a great diversity of materials of many different styles to stock their displays. It was quickly apparent that the local Chinchero style was not the best seller. Tourists are drawn to the ornate red and white styles from the Lares area, and especially favor the figure-ground patterns. These are woven in a complementary-warp weave with three-span floats aligned in alternate pairs (called "pebble weave" in the handweaving literature).² The principle of alternate pairs of warp yarns that float over three weft yarns and then tie down under one is actually in wide use in Chinchero patterns such as *loraypo* (figs. 1, 2). The Lares styles are different for their use of figure-ground compositions such as the Tupac Amaru shown in figure 7. This pictorial weaving was unknown and seemingly beyond the grasp of Chinchero weavers, who were content to weave their less

popular abstract patterns and simply buy and sell the figure-ground patterned cloth produced by their neighbors.

In 1979, all that was changed by Nilda Callañaupa (fig. 8), a young woman who, by the age of fourteen, had raised the collective eyebrows of Chinchero by learning all the traditional patterns and executing them with flair. By 1979, she had begun to experiment with *caballitos*, a figure-ground composition of a horse from the Lares valley and elsewhere (fig. 9). Within a few months she astounded the weaving community not only by producing a number of belts that duplicated perfectly patterns found on Lares area cloth but also by creating figures that had never been seen before. She was able to see these figurative ways of designing, to grasp the implications of the idea, and to use it to achieve a degree of freedom of design not previously known in Chinchero. By 1982, figure-ground patterns of this type came into general use in Chinchero, and at age seventeen, Nilda

Callañaupa had not simply controlled but actually revolutionized the textile complex of her town through the active and aggressive acquisition of a new weaving idea.³ Significantly, however, many weavers today cannot identify her as the source of these new ideas. Within a few more years, this act of diffusion would no doubt appear as anonymous as that which brought the use of supplementary warp forty years ago.

Not all potential diffusions meet with such success even with the stewardship of a talented and resourceful individual. Between 1976 and 1980, Nazaria Quispe of Kupir ayllu, Chinchero (fig. 10), captured and dominated a foreign loom technology used in Bolivia to make belts with a distinctive banded design based on 2/1 herringbone twill weave.⁴ The Bolivian belts have a pattern in which a row of three-span floats of one color is immediately followed by a row of three-span floats of a second color, which, with the tight twist of the yarns used, causes a crinkled effect (fig. 11).⁵ The procedure involves a separate shedding device to control each of three colors of warp (fig. 12). Chinchero weavers have made a three-color complementary-warp weave for quite some time, but they have used a fundamentally dual process, as shown in figure 13. The warp is divided into two leases, each of which has a single shedding device. One lease is composed of single threads of one color, while the other has pairs of threads of two colors. In the Chinchero method, one color is opposed to a choice of the other two. Nazaria's multiple heddle group setup not only expresses different relations between the warp yarns and allows this new banded and crinkled effect, but theoretically, at least, it opens the door for Chinchero weavers to a wide range of truly spectacular Bolivian patterns that require a more complex setup than the two sheds generally used in Chinchero.

Nazaria's source for this information was a monolingual Quechua-speaking woman who lived with her family for a time in Chinchero as a missionary of the Ba'hai faith. She was a rather shy young lady from the Sucre region of Bolivia, and an adept and productive weaver. While she was in Chinchero, her products were offered for sale in the Sunday market without any remarkable success. Of the number of people who made friends with her, only Nazaria learned to do this kind of weaving, and continued after the Bolivian missionary left the community. A small number of Nazaria's "crinkle" belts were regularly for sale in the Chinchero market until 1983.



Fig. 9. Detail of a belt in the same technique as the one shown in figure 7, in the *caballitos* pattern woven by Nilda Callañaupa of Chinchero.

Nazaria is about seventy-five years old [in 1984] and has been well known as a weaver for some time, including national recognition that took her to Lima about 1970. By 1977, however, she was beginning to be plagued by cataracts, and by 1982 she was virtually blind. She left Chinchero for Onoraque, near Calca, and most likely will never return as a productive weaver again. The "crinkle" belts are gone from Chinchero; Nazaria Quispe's attempt at an acquisition of a new textile idea has disappeared with her.

The preceding examples demonstrate that what appears to be the anonymous absorption of a new idea may in fact result directly from the actions of a talented individual, but that even with the presence of such an individual, a new idea may not take hold. The successful diffusions had a clear economic advantage for Chinchero weavers: in the case of using supplementary warp, the benefit was increased speed of production; while in the case of the complementary-warp weave figural designs, it was production control of a sure seller. Nazaria Quispe's introduction of the "crinkle" belt carried none of these advantages.

Nevertheless, other factors are also important. First of all, the use of supplementary warp

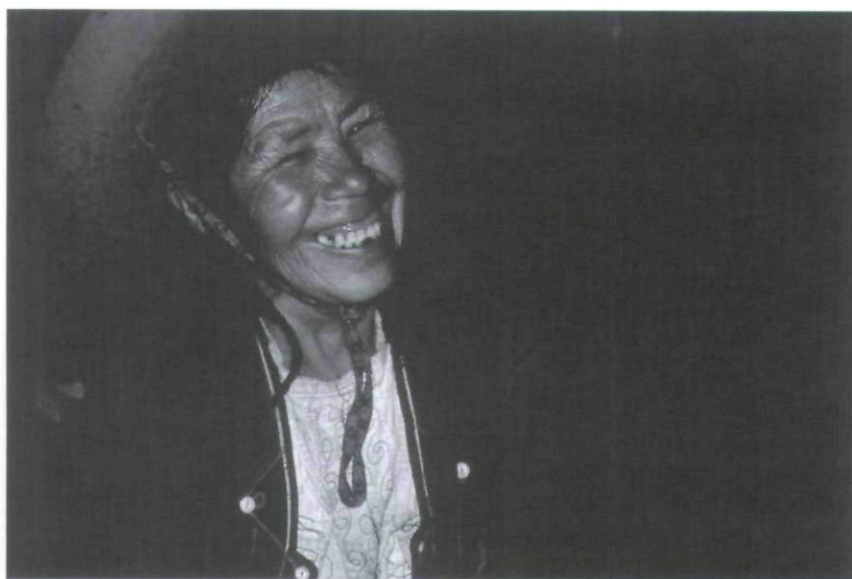


Fig. 10. The late Nazaria Quispe of Kupir ayllu, Chinchero, weaver of the "crinkle" belt.

and complementary-warp weave figural designs are at home in areas contiguous with Chinchero, and these weavers mingle with each other in Cuzco and at fairs such as Tiobamba and Huanca. By contrast, the "crinkle" belt is completely foreign. More importantly, the use of supplementary warp and the complementary-warp figural designs were learned from woven examples that were held in the hand and investigated haptically and visually, while Nazaria learned from the weaver herself. It would seem perhaps easier to learn with this sort of coaching; in fact, that is why I went to Chinchero in the first place. But this is not necessarily so for Quechua people, whose normal learning procedures depend mostly on long hours of solitary investigation and little teacher-student feedback.⁶ In the case of the "crinkle" belt, the weaver and hence the weave itself were associated with a strange new religion as well. Not only did the new idea being diffused fail to provide significant economic advantages, but also it could not overcome negative social connotations.

Although people-to-people exchanges of this sort are heavily colored by social issues, one final example suggests that economic considerations are the ultimate ruler in contemporary Chinchero. We have regularly exchanged ideas and skills in a wide range of fields with our Chinchero friends, and on this occasion we became part of the process of change. Early in 1980, I showed a number of Chinchero weavers how to make a "five-loop braid" of the kind they knew from the belts of Tambobamba (fig. 14).

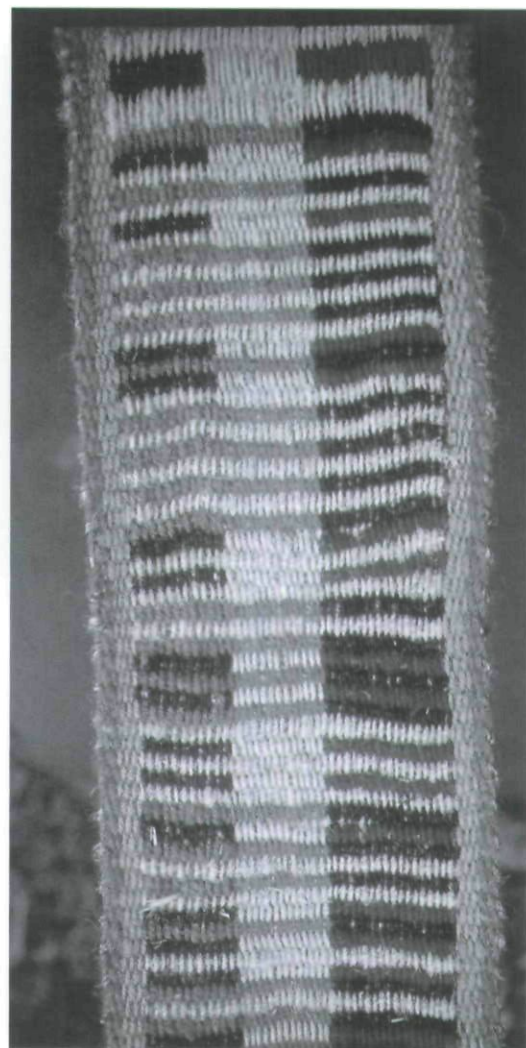


Fig. 11. "Crinkle" belt woven by Nazaria Quispe.

They were understandably mystified by the finish, and especially by the color change that can be made in the middle of the braid. The technique is actually so quick, easy, lovely, and ingenious that even knowing how to do it, it seems almost magical. It is produced by exchanging loops between the fingers of the hands rather than by bringing single elements into a center in the way hair is braided with three or four strands (fig. 15). Although we had a great time learning, it was clear that Chinchero belts do not contain enough warp yarns to make a satisfying five-loop braid finish, and we had to make dummy warps just to explore the technique.

By 1982, however, one of the women, Simeona Jaimes Livita (fig. 16), had adapted the fingers-in-loops idea in a completely new way

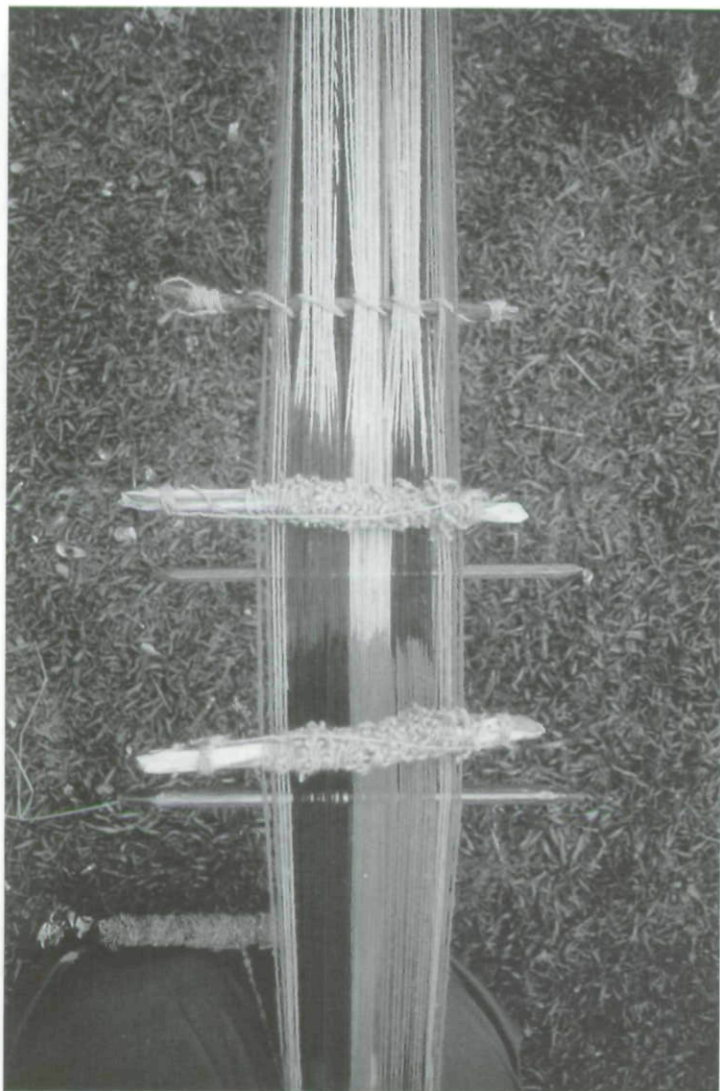


Fig. 12. Loom setup for weaving a "crinkle" belt.

that was very useful for Chinchero weavers. She discovered that by using only three loops, she could make two separate three-strand braids simultaneously (fig. 17)! This innovation cuts in half the time required to finish the thousands of belts with supplementary-warp patterns with which the girls of Chinchero flood the Plaza de Armas in Cuzco. This loop-braiding principle, while initially of little use, entered the intellectual matrix of the town and re-emerged when it had acquired economic power and potential.

These four examples of diffusion into Chinchero can offer some perspectives on more famous diffusions in Andean culture history. The fate of the Ba'hai faith in Chinchero might have been different if instead of an insignificant belt pattern the missionaries had brought innovations of

real and clear economic worth comparable to the woven patterning systems that may have been introduced with the spread of the Chavin religion.⁷ Also, watching these missionaries come and go from the town with virtually no impact leads to surmise about the slim chances of any trans-Pacific contact that brought nothing more substantial than a few ideas about what pottery vessels should look like. Of course, equating contemporary Cuzco with the archaeological record of events thousands of years ago is risky business at best.

There is much here for thought without hazarding the pitfalls of analogy with archaeology. These examples do demonstrate the complex interactions between the creative energies of the individual and her community in a folk tradition.

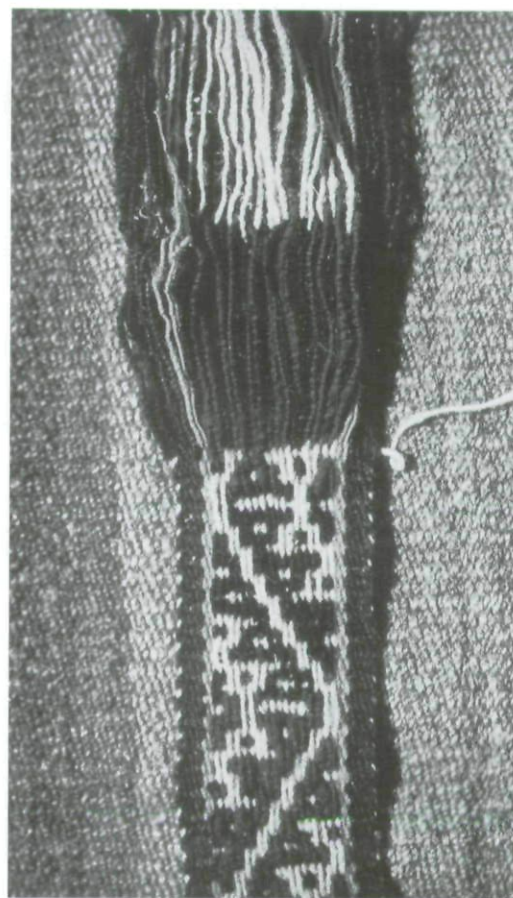


Fig. 13. Three-color complementary-warp weave Chinchero belt, in the *chhili* pattern. The leases are visible, but the shedding devices have been pushed out of the way.

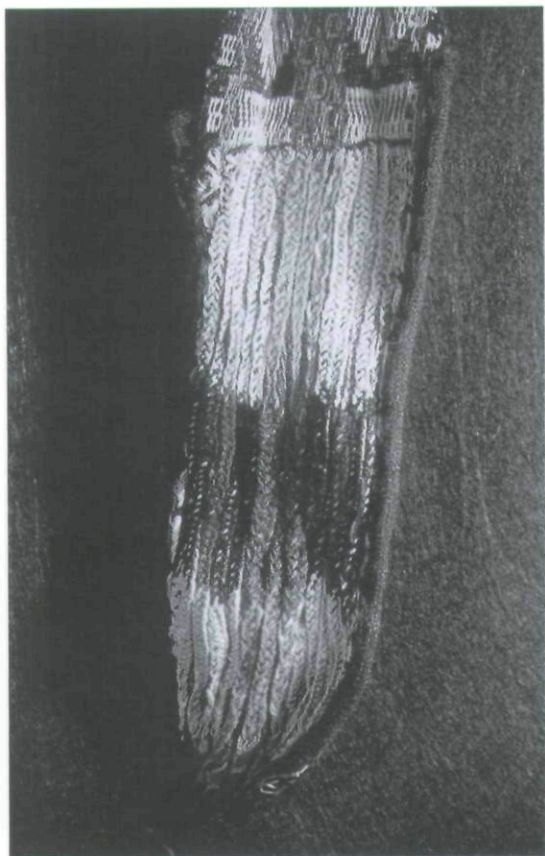


Fig. 14. Detail of a belt showing the five-loop braid end finish, from the Tambobamba area of the department of Apurimac.

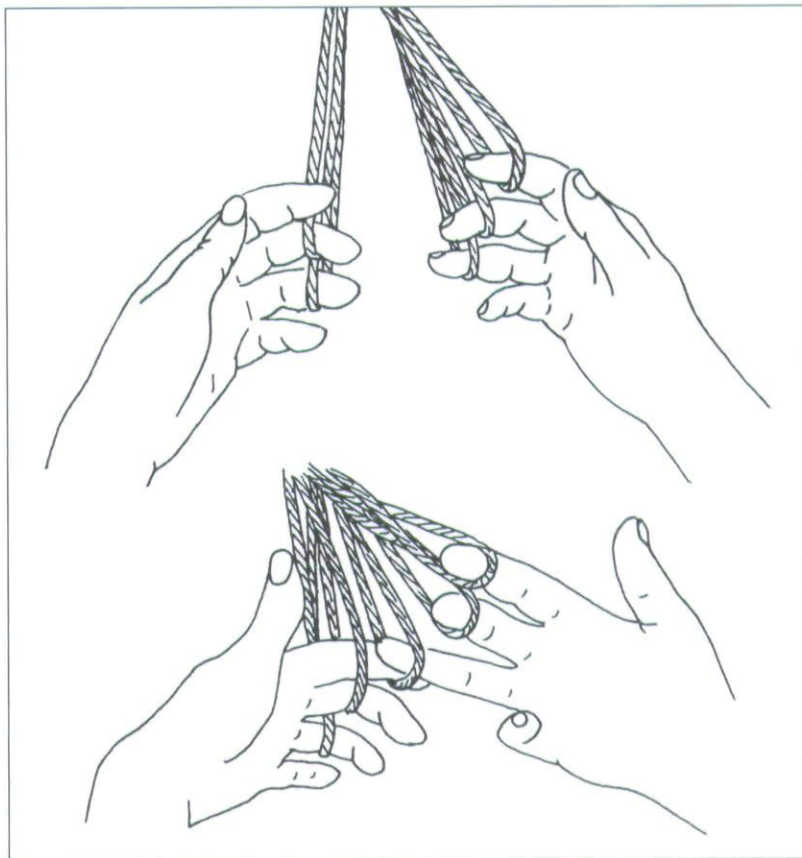


Fig. 15. Diagram of five-loop braiding. From Cason and Cahlander 1976, p. 144, fig. 30.

In most cases, the ideas were available in the general intellectual environment of the town but could not be mobilized until a particular individual acted as a catalyst to bring them into the Chinchero weaving complex. There is a special place for the exceptionally talented and inquisitive individual even within conformist folk traditions, and these kinds of individuals continually present their society with a great many more new ideas than are ever accepted. An almost Darwinian type of selection operates on these new ideas at the community level; in contemporary Chinchero, the most important single issue is economic utility. Once it happens, community acceptance becomes a veritable avalanche that effectively buries individual authorship, and with the passage of time, such key individuals and their accomplishments are glossed into anonymity of the kind cited for the introduction of the use of supplementary warp to Chinchero forty years ago.

In their curiosity and energy, these key individuals of Quechua life are not much differ-

ent from the innovators of our own society, but what happens to their product is. The conclusion, then, must focus attention upon the remarkable power of the Andean community to digest and assimilate the accomplishments of its members. All these changes with their attendant intellectual and economic implications have been incorporated into the textile tradition of the town without affecting the basic defining character of the Chinchero style. A Chinchero *llijlla* shawl or *chumpi* belt, even when decorated with supplementary warp, figurative patterns, or loop-braided finish, is still readily identified as such by all those conversant with Cuzco-area weaving styles. Village identification lies at some higher level, in the abstract ideas that govern the overall organization of cloth and costume. The Chinchero woman who makes and wears these fabrics expresses her solidarity with her *llacta masi*, those who share her community, be they nameless forebears or singular and identifiable individuals seeking to keep their balance in the changing contemporary world.

About the Author

The late Edward Franquemont (1945–2004) was an anthropologist and hand weaver who specialized in field studies in the Andes, most notably a broad-based and long-term study of the Inca weavers of Chinchero, Peru, and their products. He regularly lectured and conducted workshops about Andean weaving across the United States and served as a consultant for several museums. He published articles in both professional and popular journals. Perhaps his most important legacy, however, is the value that Chinchero weavers continue to place on their traditions and their cloth, thanks to his work in their community and his active support of the work of Nilda Callañaupa and others to encourage traditional textile production.

Notes

1. Rowe 1977, pp. 40–42; Cason and Cahlander 1976, pp. 90–91.
2. See Rowe 1977, fig. 80 for structural description. The term “pebble weave” is from Cason and Cahlander 1976, pp. 58–63.
3. Throughout the years between 1976 and 2004, Ed and Nilda often worked together in Peru and in the United States, teaching and lecturing about Andean textiles. Nilda went on to obtain a graduate degree from the University of Cuzco but has continued to focus on indigenous weaving. She founded and directs the Center for Traditional Textiles of Cuzco, a successful nonprofit organization that works with eight Cuzco communities supporting their traditional textile production [Christine R. Franquemont].
4. Rowe 1977, pp. 61–65.
5. Cason and Cahlander 1976, pp. 99, 102–3; they use the term “crinkle weave.”
6. Franquemont and Franquemont 1988.
7. Conklin 1979.



Fig. 16. Simeona Jaimes Livita with her baby.

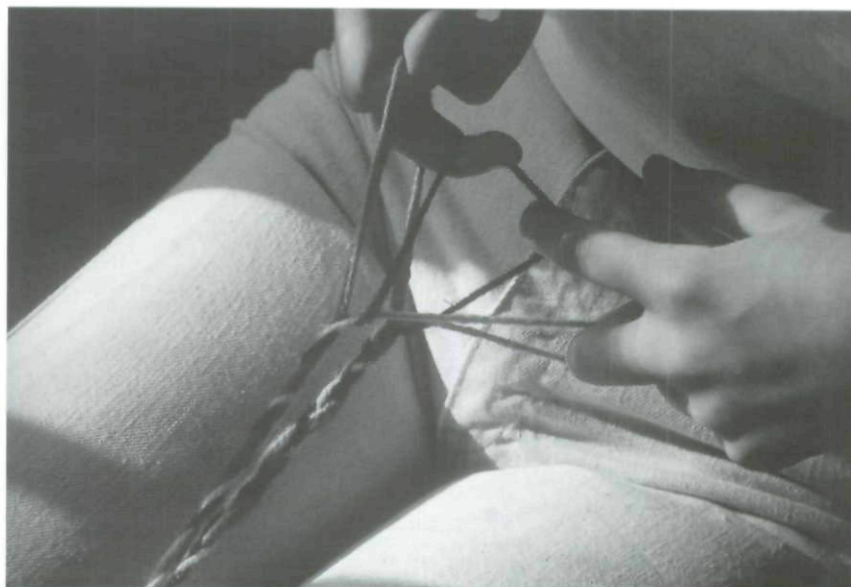


Fig. 17. Making a double braid using loop manipulation.

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